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NEW INFORMATION ON THE WEB

We enhanced our existing school IPM Web site in 2001 (www.schoolIPM.info) to help schools meet the right-to-know mandates of the Healthy Schools Act. Schools must provide parents with an annual notification that includes a prospective list of pesticides. And parents may request notification before pesticide applications occur. For these purposes, DPR posted sample letters that schools and parents can download. Our Web site also offers a template for the notification signs that schools must post before and after they make pesticide applications.

The Healthy Schools Act requires that licensed pest control businesses report their pesticide applications on public school property. Use reporting requirements took effect January 1, 2002, and DPR will receive annual reports beginning in 2003.

To implement the law, we developed regulations that cover use reports and recordkeeping requirements. They include a use report form, posted on our Web site. The form also was mailed to licensed pest control businesses statewide.

For parents, teachers, and other interested parties, our Web site also includes reference links. In addition to DPR's own product database, we offer links to the University of California IPM site and a university-sponsored database on the environmental and health effects of pesticides.

MORE SCHOOL IPM DEVELOPMENTS

DPR awarded a \$100,000 grant to develop a model school IPM program that could be extended statewide. The School IPM Alliance, coordinated by the Marin County Agricultural Commissioner, co-sponsored the first School IPM Expo in Novato in July 2001. The exposition was hosted by the Novato Unified School District and attracted more than 200 participants from 19 school districts, 18 counties, and six cities. The event featured an array of exhibits and demonstration sessions designed for school administrators, business managers, maintenance and grounds staff, licensed pesticide applicators, and IPM product vendors.

In recent months, our staff has made more than 50 presentations statewide on school IPM and the Healthy Schools Act, and we've offered DPR's assistance to help school districts start their own voluntary IPM programs. Expanding on that effort, we plan to launch a pilot School IPM train-the-trainer session in spring 2002, with six regional training sessions to follow. School district IPM coordinators will be trained in IPM principles and taken on a "hands-on" tour of a school site to observe and learn practical, low risk methods of pest management.

In coming months, DPR also will finalize and distribute a model IPM program guidebook for school districts to help them adopt least-hazardous methods. We will periodically update the guide and supporting documentation. In the next year, our outreach will include developing a "frequently asked questions" handout and making additional presentations to school groups around the state. We'll also evaluate our outreach efforts and the effectiveness of school IPM practices in a future survey.



A swarm of honeybees invaded the Sacramento home of DPR Director Paul Helliker in April 2001, giving him a chance to demonstrate IPM as he relocated the swarm into a backyard hive. The Director, clad in beekeeper clothing, talked to several TV news teams. The unusual scene attracted prominent news coverage for IPM.

Our natural winners

DPR has been giving out IPM Innovator awards since 1994 to honor California organizations that emphasize pest prevention, favor least-hazardous pest control, and share their successful strategies with others. The awards provide rare public recognition to groups and individuals who are quietly revolutionizing pest management through their efforts to reduce pesticide risks.

Our 2001 award winners were an eclectic group, ranging from roadside maintenance crews to San Francisco city gardeners to farm consultants who helped introduce IPM to citrus growers in the Central Valley. Each one of these nine IPM Innovators has made an important contribution to protecting and preserving California's environment: District 1 of the California Department of Transportation, Eureka; the City and County of San Francisco; El Modeno Gardens of Irvine; Ganna Walska Lotusland Foundation of Santa Barbara; Lundberg Family Farms of Richvale; Novato Unified School District; Pest Management Associates of Exeter; Pizza Farm of Madera; and the Sacramento Water Wise Pest Control Program.